

The Transfiguration of Our Lord – Epistle

SEEING THE LIGHT (OF CHRIST)

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Analysis by Lori A. Cornell

3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. 6 For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

DIAGNOSIS: Blinded Minds (v. 3)

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) – *Slaves to a God in Our Image*

We enlightened 21st-century folks want to believe that we serve our own purposes and no one else's. But, whether we want to believe it or not, something or someone is always lord over us. Often that god is created in our very own image-which is great if s/he exemplifies our best qualities, but if the dark side of that god (who is us) shows up, things can get pretty scary. If that god is capricious or just plain merciful, then we are forever under the burden of that unknown god. And, try as we

might to shine some light on our predicament, we remain forever in the dark, with ourselves, or some other burdensome god, as our lord.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) – *The God of This World (v. 4)*

In our manic effort to create a god worth worshiping, we fail to see that we have created that god in our own image. And the god of our creation blinds not only our eyes but our minds (v. 4) to this fact. With blinded minds, we have no chance of placing our faith in the one true God. And so we are not only blinded by the wrong god, but faithless to the right God.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) – *Perishing (v. 3)*

Kept from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ (v. 4), such worldly-god worshipers are doomed to perish (v. 3).

PROGNOSIS: Seeing the Light (v. 4)

Step 4: Initial Diagnosis (Eternal Solution) – *Veiled (v. 3) in Flesh the Godhead See*

No god created in our image can save us from perishing. But, ironically, a human created in the one-true-God's image can save us. Christ, who is the image of God (v. 4), is proclaimed by God as Lord. Christ is the one who gives sight to us blind unbelievers, by embracing the full humility of human life on the cross. His human birth, life, and death reveal how God has veiled himself (v. 3) in flesh for the sake of saving that very same flesh.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) – *Shining in Our Hearts (v. 6)*

Christ's humility sheds light on what the real God is up to; it gives to us, what Paul calls, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (v. 6). Paul compares this enlightenment to that first day of creation when God separated the light from the

darkness; in other words, God not only speaks creation into being, but through Christ God speaks faith into being. And he does this by showing us his glory in the face of Jesus Christ (v. 6).

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) – *Jesus As Lord, and We His Slaves*

Such divine humility elicits more than enlightenment for believers, it creates humility. So much humility, in fact, that we give up on proclaiming ourselves and turn our attention to more important things. We proclaim Jesus Christ (v. 5). And, as for ourselves, we gladly accept the appropriate demotion-from god-in-our-own-image to slaves for Jesus' sake (v. 5). For not only is Jesus a whole lot better at being God, he is much more benevolent. And, trusting him to do the work of grace and mercy, that means we can turn our attention to our neighbor.